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FRANCE'S TRIBUTE TO FULTON'S MEMORY.

BY HENRY BAYER, SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME EXPOSITION OF BORDEAUX TO THE UNITED STATES.

FROM the end of April until November, 1907, Bordeaux, the important and well-known French port, will hold an International Exposition in commemoration of the one-hundredth anniversary of the application of steam to navigation. It was in 1807 that Robert Fulton launched on the Hudson River the first steamboat, the "Clermont," which made regular passages between New York and Albany. The trial was successful; it excited great admiration, and steamboats were rapidly multiplied, not only on the American rivers, but also on all the navigable waters of the civilized world.

To the first centenary of such a great event—the most important and interesting in the history of navigation—such a powerful naval and maritime nation as France could not be indifferent; furthermore, it must be remembered that it was in France, on the river Loire, that Fulton, in 1803, made his initial experiment. He remained in France quite a long time, living in Paris for nearly seven years, in the home of the American poet, Mr. Joel Barlow, at that time Minister to France. There, besides studying physics, chemistry and mathematics, he learned the French language, which he spoke fluently when he returned to America.

The French have decided to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the successful application of steam to navigation by illustrating the history of navigation from the earliest times. Models of every kind of ship, ancient and modern, commercial and naval, are to be collected, together with a display of all that pertains to ocean geography and to river and sea navigation. This will be complemented by an International Exposition of all kinds of raw

and manufactured goods, as the extension of trade has been the consequence of Fulton's invention.

The International Maritime Exposition, while organized by the competent "*Ligue Maritime Française*," which has for President Admiral Gervais of the French Navy, is under the official patronage of the French Government, the General Council of the Gironde, the Municipality, the Chamber of Commerce and the Philomathic Society of Bordeaux. The Commissioner-General for this important world's fair, which will be more interesting than any other of that kind ever held, is M. Bertin, ex-Engineer-in-Chief of the French Navy, Member of the "*Institut de France*." He has for Deputy Commissioner-General M. V. Morlot, the distinguished Parisian publicist.

They have decided, for the Exposition, a general classification of subjects into seventeen groups, as follows:

"Marine History and Fine Arts; Instruction; Charts and Instruments; Navigation and Commerce; Navy; Materials for Construction; Motor Machines and Propellers; Fittings and Apparatus; Automobile Navigation and Boats of all types; Aeronautics; Port and Harbor Works; Sea and River Fishing; Hygiene, Salvage and Sports; Ship's Provisions, Food; Various Industries; Commercial Relations of Bordeaux with the Colonies; Social Economy, Works of Mutuality and Charity."

Each group is divided into classes, which sometimes number as many as eleven.

The Exposition of Bordeaux being in honor of an American inventor, all exhibits coming from the United States will go into the main building, a splendid construction, 750 feet long and 400 feet wide, built on the model of the Palace of the Doges at Venice. It will be a reproduction of the most elegant kind, a piece of art of exquisite beauty.

Numerous international congresses will reunite the experts on maritime, commercial and scientific questions, and important and profitable discussions will take place.

A Special Committee of Honor, composed of forty-six prominent Americans, is patronizing the United States Section.

The General Committee of Honor of the Exposition has for President M. Armand Fallières, President of the French Republic; after him come Messrs. Casimir Périer and Emile Loubet, formerly, also, Presidents of the French Republic; then, the most famous French names in politics, industry, trade, finance and science.

The English, Germans, Japanese, Russians, Italians, Dutch and Spaniards are represented also in the General Committee of Honor by the most prominent men of their countries.

Official notification and invitations have been despatched to all the nations, most of which have already agreed to participate, as Fulton's genius has been profitable to every country, no matter where it is located, no matter what its degree of civilization or the density of its population.

The principal naval nations, including the United States, have decided to send imposing squadrons either for the inauguration of the Exposition or during the continuance of the Fair. Furthermore, the leading countries of the world, participating officially, will each erect, or are already erecting, a national pavilion on a site placed freely at their disposal. The effect of these pavilions, scattered throughout the magnificent gardens of the Exposition, will be extremely pleasing—here, an old English mansion full of simplicity and charm, with upholstery and furniture of some other century, or a Russian building, with lengthened and high-pointed domes; there, a reduction of a massive and solid German castle, with gray stones, Gothic-carved windows and an "open door," or an elegant Japanese pagoda, with superposed roofs, complicated carpentry work and, as decorations, strange animals in metal and wonderful flowers; farther on, a coquettish Italian construction of the purest Renaissance style, or a Flemish belfry, with a delightful chime of bells playing at all hours; elsewhere, a Swiss cottage with flowery belvedere, or Dutch, Austrian, Spanish and Mexican buildings reproducing faithfully the respective national characters. Each construction will stand on a site carefully selected for it, and will be surrounded by landscapes the most appropriate for the nicest artistic effect.

President Roosevelt has sent a special message to the Senate recommending an appropriation to permit the United States to be represented in that cordial and fraternal meeting of the nations.

The message accompanies a report from the acting Secretary of State suggesting that the appropriation should be granted quickly.

Under such influential and favorable auspices, no doubt, the United States, also, will have their own pavilion at Bordeaux; it will contain, mainly, Robert Fulton's relics, kindly promised by his descendants living in this country, American flags, busts, and

pictures of United States Presidents, paintings recalling historical episodes in which this country and France were connected, some governmental exhibits, etc.

As a citizen, Robert Fulton was a very good one; he ardently loved his country. In 1796, he published in London a treatise upon canals, and secured a patent for a double inclined plane to be used for purposes of transportation. All this, with models of machines, was submitted to Sir John Sinclair, President of the British Board of Agriculture, and was received with complimentary resolutions of recommendation. Remembering his own country, Robert Fulton sent to the Governor of Pennsylvania and to General George Washington copies of this treatise and full explanations. The acknowledgment to Fulton was expressed in the most thankful manner. Patriotism as well as gratitude to the promoters of progress are the great civic virtues of the American people, and, owing to this precious fact, we may confidently hope that the distinguished statesmen who have to decide upon the official participation of the United States in the International Exposition of Bordeaux will say that Fulton's own country shall take part in celebrating his achievement.

The application of steam to navigation—the most pacific, useful and beneficent invention—has extensively developed trade, disseminating wealth and prosperity; it has made practicable bold expeditions, such as those led by Peary in his search for the Arctic Pole; it has aided important scientific observations and discoveries; it has brought together the people of very dissimilar countries, facilitating the study of languages, industries and fine arts.

The Robert Fulton Monument Association of New York, which has Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt for President, will this year lay the cornerstone of a splendid mausoleum in memory of the great inventor; while, in France, at Bordeaux, there will be not only this International Exposition, but also the erection, in Paris, of an allegorical monument as a tribute of respect and esteem to Robert Fulton, and to his precursors, Denis Papin and Jouffroy d'Abbans, who also made studies and experiments on the same subject, though it was only after Fulton's triumph that the invention became effective.

HENRY BAYER.